# Midterm Exam

- You are responsible for *all* the material covered in the assigned reading, PowerPoint slides, and lectures.
- ***Exam content:***
  1. *definitions* (1-3 sentences each; 4 points per definition x 10 definitions = 40 total points; e.g., *elenchus* or *aporia* [Book I])
  2. *short answers* (4-6 sentences each; 10 points per answer x 4 answers = 40 total points; e.g., describe and explain the metaphysical metaphor of The Sun [Book VI])
  3. *one short essay* (1 page; 20 total points; e.g., reproduce Plato's argument for why the soul is tripartite [Book IV])
- ***How to prepare:*** focus mainly (but *not* entirely) on the PowerPoint/lecture material **and** associated parts of text. **Use the PowerPoint slides as a study guide, in short.**
- **Closed book, closed notes. Bring nothing but a pen and/or pencil. (You will write on**

# Plato's *Republic*

## Book IX:

## The Tyrannic Man and The Full Theory of the Good

*(allows Socrates to respond **fully** to Glaucon and Adeimantus' challenge from Book II [576c, 578b, 587b-e;*

# Tyrannic Man

- Plato paints a frightening portrait of tyrannic man, born of democratic man. He is characterized by a "complete hostility to law," having had a "great winged drone" of erotic desire planted in him by his family. The need to serve his "tyrant love" leads him to attack not only his parents and city but also ***the better parts of himself.*** *(Again, city/soul.)*
- He is *without friends*, "always one man's master or another's slave," and is the "most wretched of men," especially if he "doesn't live out a private life but has bad luck and by some **misfortune** is given the occasion to become a [real] tyrant."
- Socrates notes that "while not having *control of himself* [he] attempts to rule others" and is consequently "a real slave to the ***greatest fawning*** and slavery" (572d-579e).
- The final description of the tyrannic man at 589a is

# The Full Theory of the Good

- Much of Plato's *Full Theory of the Good* is simply a recapitulation of his *Formal (or Political) Theory of the Good* from Book IV. Here he
  - redescribes his ***threefold division of pleasures*** (gain-loving, victory-loving, and wisdom-loving);
  - speaks of ***the superiority of the last***, given its *comprehensive knowledge of the others* (cf. Mill's *Utilitarianism:* Socrates and fool; man and pig);
  - and argues for ***its right to rule in the soul*** (580d-583b; 586c-587a).
- He also *extends* the Formal Theory in a number of different directions, however. For instance, he considers several different

1. **unnecessary vs. necessary *(discussed in Book VIII: 558d-559d):*** The *former* are described as those pleasures “of which a man could rid himself if he were to practice from youth on and whose presence, moreover, does no good—and sometimes even does the opposite of good,” while the *latter* are described as “those we aren’t able to turn aside justly…as well as those whose satisfaction benefits us.”

   Examples of the ***former*** include seafood, sweets, Attic cakes, and Corinthian girls; examples of the ***latter*** include food for the sake of sustenance and sex for the sake of

2. **lawless vs. lawful *(subsets of the unnecessary pleasures: 571b-572c):*** The former variety of pleasure is “hostile to law”; it is the “beastly and wild part, gorged with food or drink” which “doesn’t shrink from attempting intercourse…with a mother or with anyone else at all—human beings, gods, and beasts; or attempting any foul murder at all, and there is no food from which it abstains. And, in a word, it omits no act of folly or shamelessness.”

   Thus, lawless pleasures include incest, parricide, & other ***taboo*** acts. Lawful (though still unnecessary) pleasures would

3. **negative vs. positive *(583c-585b):***
   The *former* kind of pleasure, said to include “just about most [of the pleasures], and the greatest ones,” are simply “kinds of relief from pains,” like *scratching an itch*. For example, the pleasure of ***eating*** is (on this theory) simply the cessation of hunger pangs. (Cf. *Gorgias* [the “leaky bucket” and the “dirty bird”]; others: sleep, bathing, sex, etc.)

   The *latter* kind of pleasure, on the other hand, is *not* merely a cessation of pain; pleasant ***smells***, for example, “*without previous pain*, suddenly become extraordinarily great and, once having ceased, leave no pain behind.” *{Is eating*

4. **relative vs. absolute *(583b, 585c):*** The *former* category of pleasure is “neither entirely true nor pure…something never the same and mortal,” whereas the *latter* is “always the same, immortal, and true” (Nussbaum: ***stability, purity,*** & ***truth***) and “participates more in pure being.” Examples of the *former* include “food, drink, seasoning, and nourishment in general,” whereas examples of the *latter* include “true opinion~, **knowledge**, intelligence and, in sum, all of virtue.”

# Relating these (sub)categories

- The relationship between these different categories and subcategories of pleasures is a rather complex one. For example, some *negative* pleasures might be *necessary* (e.g., basic food), and some *positive* pleasures might be *relative* (e.g., pleasant smells).
- Moreover, their relationship to the Formal Theory's threefold division of pleasures is complicated. For example, some pleasures of ***honor*** are necessary, others unnecessary but lawful, and still others unnecessary & lawless (e.g., cheating to win).
- One thing seems certain, however, at least from Plato's perspective: *the pleasures of* ***knowledge*** *are always* ***necessary.***

# Platonic Asceticism

Is Plato's Full Theory of the Good best described as *ascetic*? Nussbaum believes so and points to a number of supporting passages. For example:

1. As far back as Book IV, the desiring part of the soul is treated as *unruly* and *seditious*, in sore need of the ***discipline*** provided by the other two parts (442b).
2. In Book IX, we are treated to a harsh description of those men who are ***ruled solely by desire:*** "after the fashion of ***cattle***, always looking down and with their heads bent to earth and table, they feed, fattening themselves, and copulating; and, for the sake of getting more of these things, they kick and butt with horns and hooves of *iron,* killing each other because they are insatiable" (586b; *recall Myth of Metals [**III**]*).
3. Also, desire is described as "***a many-colored, many-headed beast*** that has a ring of heads

- Still, there are other points where Plato's asceticism is ***tempered:***
  1. For instance, he says that *reason*, when in charge of the soul, will act as a gardener, ***"nourishing and cultivating the tame heads [of desire], while hindering the growth of the savage ones"*** (589b). He seems to suggest here that some desires should be *encouraged to grow* rather than uprooted—a peculiar sort of asceticism.
  2. He later asserts that the just man will "not even look to health, nor give precedence to being strong, healthy, or fair ***unless he's also going to become moderate as a result of them…"*** (591d). Here again he acknowledges the need to tend the body *so long as* it benefits the soul.
- Plato's asceticism, like Immanuel Kant's, seems to focus not on the *elimination* of (physical) desire but rather on the

# The Rule of Reason

- In a fascinating passage, Plato says that “it’s better for all to be ruled by what is divine and prudent, *especially when one has it as his own within himself; but, if not, set over one from outside*…. [as with] children, their not being set free until ***we establish a regime in them as in the city,*** and until—having cared for the best part in them with the like in ourselves—we establish a similar guardian and ruler *in them* to take our place; only then, do we set them free” (591a).
- Here, the education of children and citizens is described in the political language of Book IV. **The first-best form of rule is to place reason as a guardian within each citizen (most typically in childhood); failing this, however, reason must rule *indirectly*, through the application of force or the use of deception by rulers.** But as we have seen throughout the text, *some* such indirect rule is required for *all* citizens except the most mature of the PKs—even the immature PKs must be compelled to

# Kallipolis: Bridge or Blueprint?

- This question receives yet another answer at 592b, where Socrates states: “But in heaven, perhaps, a ***pattern*** is laid up for the man who wants to see and found a city *within himself* on the basis of what he sees. ***It doesn’t make any difference whether it is or will be somewhere***. For he would mind the things of this city alone, and of no other.” (Cf. 572d)
- Here he seems to argue that the pattern is *primarily* intended to guide individuals in the *reform of their own souls*, but his emphasis on institutional details of the *kallipolis* throughout the *Republic* suggests